

## CRITERIA 1: NEED AND SATISFACTION

The Youth Athletic Facilities Grant program is designed to help communities like Sedro-Woolley improve fields and the quality of life for its residents. Grant programs like the YAF helps smaller and underserved communities compete with the grant applicants that have more funding resources available to them. Winnie Houser Playfields meets the definition and spirit of the Youth Athletic Facilities Grant program.

The City of Sedro-Woolley's population is growing at an enormous rate. The population within Sedro-Woolley City limits of approximately 12,000 drastically misrepresents the population of our service area which is recognized as the Sedro-Woolley School District with a population of approximately 28,000. The district has about 50% of free and reduced lunch eligibility that is used by the population and the poverty rate is 21.4%. There is 27.3 of the population is under 18 years old. **This project will: Renovate and add 2 full size and 4 youth soccer fields, restrooms, additional parking and complete irrigation for better field conditions and longevity.**

This project also aligns with the SCORP priorities as stated in the Executive Summary:

Priority #3. Meet the Needs of Youth;

1. To provide a variety of activities for youth,
2. Build and renovate athletic facilities for youth and,
3. Support programs for youth. 57% of the youth in our state prefer outdoor sports.

The City has experience a growth in its youth leagues, not only in numbers but different sports disciplines. Many different youth leagues are starving for field space, and Sedro-Woolley is running out of suitable property for recreation. Winnie Houser Park & Playfields is the only park in the city dedicated primarily to Youth Athletic Facilities that is managed by the City of Sedro-Woolley. There is NO other field to be used for athletic purposes within the service area that is available for dedicated use. In the summer of 2015 the city was approached by the Sedro-Woolley Youth Soccer Association who came expressing their need for additional space for the growing soccer population. The community has relied on the fields from the Sedro-Woolley School District. As the population increases and the schools have the need for additional classrooms, that space is getting smaller. The property that they had been practicing on for several years was owned by the Sedro-Woolley School District and was being developed for a new Middle School.

The current fields have been graded and seeded and have been converted from a donated potato field crop to playfields. A parking lot has been graveled and portable toilets have been put in place. The YAF funding will greatly improve the playability and function of the playfields. The improvements that have been made so far to the park have been done at minimal cost. If the grant is successful, the grant will pay for many improvements that Winnie Houser Playfield needs to make it a suitable facility.

The City in partnership with the Sedro-Woolley Soccer Association coordinate the use and scheduling of the fields there are currently 20 teams and 350 youth that need usable field space. There is new interest in youth Lacrosse needing field space. The league is forming and has three teams and 90 players that need space. There is also a Hispanic Soccer league (Laliga Tlaxti) that has formed and is in need of field space that has 30 teams of U-6 to U-15. Frankly, without the improvement the City will not be able to accommodate additional sports. With the improvements the fields can be used 100% of the season with little down time. This will greatly increase the availability of field use. To date the Soccer Association has paid for hydro-seeding and some field improvements.

## **CRITERIA 2: DESIGN AND COST ESTIMATES**

Winnie Houser Playfields YAF grant will be used for:

- Renovate and reorganize two full-size soccer fields and four youth/modified fields.
- Pave and reorganize gravel parking lot with added ADA parking stalls
- Install and provide for full restroom facilities
- Provide security fencing
- Full field irrigation

(See schematic design for phase 1)

The site has been converted from an old potato farm field and is flat with perfect soils for field grass turf. Currently the field has been graded and hydro-seeded for playing fields. An area has been graded and graveled for a parking lot and portable toilets. The City has worked in partnership with the Sedro-Woolley Soccer Association to provide field space for hundreds of soccer enthusiasts. The grant request will improve the playability, safety, convenience and sanitary conditions of the playfields.

The acquisition/donation of this land fits perfectly with the project design and site suitability. The cost estimates for this project have been coordinated with Landscape Architect, CXT restroom consultants, fencing company, engineering and irrigation consultants. The project consultant has worked with the City to accurately estimate project costs (with inflation factor) and maintenance considerations.

This project has been phased in two standalone phases. The first phase is included in this grant application. The second phase will include a full-size playground and adult fitness components and will be presented in subsequent grant applications for local parks.

The design of this project maximizes the best use of the property and provides for added/organized space that takes full advantage of the area provided. The additional paved parking stalls and organization will allow the cars to get off the main road and neighborhood driveways and accommodate them within the parking area. The paving of the parking lot will greatly reduce the weekly maintenance for weeding/raking and trying to organize the parking area.

The in-ground irrigation system will reduce the watering maintenance time and increase the safety and playability of the field for each season. The new restroom facility will provide users and adequate place to use the restroom with diaper changing stations and handwashing facilities for better sanitation, aesthetics and respectability of users.

### **CRITERIA 3: SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

The City has focused on many different aspects of sustainability and environmental stewardship for the Winnie Houser Playfields. We have focused on three major factors in this project:

#### **SITE LOCATION:**

- Preservation of non-developed farmland soils (preservation of undeveloped land)
- On-site soils suitable for play fields (reduces construction soil import)
- Walkable from SW portion of City area (reduces driving trips)
- Within ¼ mile walk from major bus line 300 (reduces driving trips)

#### **SITE DESIGN:**

- Low Impact Development strategies to treat, slow, and infiltrate parking lot runoff (water quality)
- Native and drought tolerant plants used for vegetative screen planting, use of locally produced plant material, soil amendments, and other materials (reduces trucking carbon emissions)
- No work within Skagit River riparian buffer to preserve water quality systems and habitat (water quality)
- Use of best practices and soil management plan during construction to reduce air and water pollution (water and air quality)
- No use of wood from threatened species (reduces freight emissions, reduces habitat and natural systems destruction)

#### **MAINTENANCE:**

- Irrigation system: rain or moisture sensor to reduce water waste, frequent reviews of timer programming for maximum efficiency (reduces potable water use and maintenance time management)
- Lawn care – no bagging of grass clippings (recycle organic matter)
- Slow release fertilizer – minimum amounts used (reduces chemical fertilizer use)
- Lime to correct pH – allows for less fertilizer use (reduces chemical fertilizer use)

#### **CRITERIA 4: FACILITY MANAGEMENT**

Parks in the City of Sedro-Woolley are maintained by the city's Public Works Operations Division in coordination with the Parks operational plan. Operations have a total of 9 full time positions and 11 part time/seasonal positions. The city has been maintaining parks for over a century. Our oldest city park was developed in 1912. The City excels in developing partnerships with service clubs, user groups and other volunteers to assist with maintenance of our facilities. All of our city parks are cleaned, safety inspected, and open to the public 365 days per year.

The Division Supervisor and the employee assigned as Parks Lead have been with the Department for 18 years. As part of the plan two of the full time positions and six of the part time seasonal positions are assigned primarily to Parks Maintenance full time, although the other employees are utilized in parks maintenance and on special projects on an as needed basis. The city has recently acquired equipment to further improve the quality of the turf in the parks.

**As part of the Parks Maintenance plan a full time maintenance position was added in January of 2018 in anticipation of the needs of our expanding parks system and growing city.**

#### **CRITERIA 5: AVAILABILITY**

The playfields are currently open all year long with the exception of field maintenance and field rehabilitation time. This is due to lack of in-ground irrigation and above ground watering with a reel-watering system. The Youth Soccer Association schedules the fields from August 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup>. By the time the season rolls around the field is in rough shape due to dry summers the lack of programmed irrigation creates "field clumping". Which is a safety/tripping hazard.

With field improvements/renovation the City has requests for expanded and added leagues and field usage and availability will increase from March to December. This increase will go from a concentrated three months to 10 months a year over a 100% usage increase. Most of the increase will help the underserve population with the addition of the La Liga Tlaxtli soccer club and the local Lacrosse team. In the 2018 Parks Budget the City has included funding to purchase new field scheduling software that will allow for easier scheduling for our facilities.

With the addition of the permanent restrooms parking and field upgrades, Winnie Houser Park will be used all year long with passive/active recreation.

## **CRITERIA 6: READINESS TO PROCEED**

Our project is shovel ready. The construction will be managed in house by Sedro-Woolley Public Works with on staff project management and engineering support. If grant funds are awarded we anticipate construction on the park improvements to begin early 2020. We currently have the following ready to go upon grant award.

1. Completed irrigation design and RFP ready to be advertised for competitive bidding.
2. Paving and Striping Plan to be constructed by Sedro-Woolley Public Works Crews.
3. Plans for a new CXT pre-fabricated restroom building have been completed.
4. Septic System Design has been reviewed and ready.
5. Site plan is at a schematic level for a planning document and is at 45% completion.

Construction schedule would anticipate project completion by end of 2020.

The Winnie Houser Playfield Project is ready to proceed as soon as contract agreements are signed by the RCO and the City of Sedro-Woolley. The field upgrades, renovation and improvements all have been vetted by City Staff, vendors, contractors and consultants. This project has minimal impact on critical areas as it is already being used. Renovations and upgrades will not impact neighboring properties. All we need is the YAF funding allocation.

## **CRITERIA 7: PROJECT SUPPORT**

The Winnie Houser Playfield Project has been supported by the community, soccer association, elected officials and neighbors. The Youth Soccer's Association has invested money, time and energy into the current fields and have committed future funding for this project. Quoted from the Association President: *"The Sedro-Woolley Youth Soccer Association (SWYSA) want to thank you and the City for your efforts to address the needs at the Winnie Houser fields. We have dedicated money to help to this point and will continue to support the fields and your efforts to make them a true complex for youth to use and enjoy. We are committed to more monetary help to make this a more user friendly park."*

This project also has support from business owners and look towards *economic development* as a catalyst for their support as quoted by John Janicki President of Janicki Industries: *"I am writing this letter in support of the proposed improvements to the Winnie Houser Park and Playfields. Janicki Industries plans to increase the number of employees to 1000 in 2018. We are the largest employer in the area. These parks will be a positive selling point for families who are relocating to our area. We are fully supportive and would like to assist you were we can".*

Winnie Houser Playfields property was partially donated to support park development by the Houser family. This project has been supported with public involvement in the updated comp. plan and planning process.